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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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AGRICULTURE

GENERAL FARM COMMODITIES AND
RISK MANAGEMENT

SMALL BUSINESS

(CHAIR) SUBCOMMITTEE ON
HEALTHCARE AND TECHNOLOGY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON

AGRICULTURE, ENERGY AND TRADE

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST
AND SOUTH ASIA

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,
NONPROLIFERATION, AND TRADE

July 20, 2012

The Honorable Dave Camp
Chairman – Committee on Ways & Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Camp,

I wanted to submit for the record my appreciation for your willingness to hold a hearing on the implications of the Supreme Court's ruling preserving the individual mandate on the grounds that it is a tax and that Congress has the broad power to levy taxes far beyond the historic scope of tax authority.

The Supreme Court verified what many in Congress already knew - the Affordable Care Act is a tax - one that increases the financial burdens on every American and will go down in history as the most significant expansion of government power over the lives of its citizens. This law has and continues to be bad policy for all Americans and future generations. The precedent it sets is far reaching and opens the door for further tax increases not aimed at improving the wellbeing of the American people, but rather to force them upon them what Washington deems mandatory.

I deeply respect our judicial system and the legislative process by which our nation is governed and the recent ruling handed down by the Supreme Court that Congress has the power to tax and impose its will on the American people through taxation and penalties. However, having that power does not mean it should be used. The decision by the Supreme Court sends a direct message to Congress and policy makers - while Congress may have the authority to tax the American people into submission, as their elected representation we owe it to them to be both responsible and effective leaders with that authority. Abuse of that power sets a dangerous standard going forward.

The implications of the passage and subsequent upholding of the largest tax increase in modern history are astonishing. The Affordable Care Act, which was enacted under the guise of health reform, has done nothing but put undue burdens on thousands of small businesses across the country, increased costs, and is reducing access to quality care for millions of patients.

I applaud your leadership and willingness to probe the impacts of the recent ruling and shed light on the implications that Congress has the broad power to levy taxes far beyond our historic precedent. As you have so aptly pointed out, this ruling sets a dangerous precedent with potentially enormous consequences - one we must pay close attention to so that we may aptly

manage the relationship that the government has with the American people. Failing to closely guard the relationship between citizen and government is a failure to understand the expectations the American people have placed on their elected officials.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Renee Ellmers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Renee" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Ellmers".

Renee Ellmers
Member of Congress